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**THUNDER BAY THEATRE ANNOUNCES UPCOMING SEASON OF VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING**

August 4, 2021

Alpena, MI -- Thunder Bay Theatre Inc. (TBT)  is excited to announce its upcoming season of virtual programming that kicks off August 12, 2021. TBT has contracted with three directors to produce and direct its upcoming season of theatre productions that includes the classic *Miss Julie* by August Strindberg, the Greek comedy *The Birds* by Aristophanes, and episodes from *The Twilight Zone* adapted for theatre. Each virtual production will be available to stream via Thunder Bay Theatre’s website with the purchase of a season pass for $30. With the purchase of a pass, patrons will receive access to a password-protected page where they will be able to stream each production at any point during the show’s three-day run.

Earlier this summer, TBT put out a call for a Virtual Artistic Director to create virtual theater programming for the summer and fall months and received applicants from all over the country. TBT has hired directors Tasha Spear, Yasmine Jahanmir, and Ciera Eis to each produce one show for the summer and fall season. The three will each produce an additional show in early 2022 that will be announced at a later date.

“We are thrilled to be producing theatre again, and we are excited to branch out into virtual programming as we are unable to gather in our building,” said TBT Board President Lisa Larkin. “The three directors who are producing shows for us this year and next have incredible professional backgrounds and extensive experience creating engaging virtual shows. We believe the virtual shows will allow new and existing patrons to experience theatre in a new way while still providing them with the quality and diversity of arts programming TBT is committed to creating.”

Beginning this summer, TBT is also offering a Theatre Education Series, where patrons can learn more about the history of theatre and what goes on behind the scenes to put a show together. The series will feature six 15-20 minute educational videos that will be released each month on topics such as the audition process, Shakespeare and his influence today, and the importance of stage lighting. Kevin Reams, a drama teacher who has previously worked at TBT as both Artistic Director and as an actor, will be creating and presenting the videos. One video will be released each month and archived on TBT’s website. The entire series can be purchased for $25 and can be accessed at any time. You can view more information about the series and purchase a pass here: <https://www.thunderbaytheatre.com/theatre-education-series.html>

Since last year’s fire at the neighboring John A. Lau Saloon, TBT’s Board of Directors has been busy planning the next steps to renovate their over one-hundred-year-old building that suffered water and smoke damage from the fire. TBT has been working with Meridian Contracting to provide cost estimates for the entire building’s renovation, including tuck-pointing the historic brick on all facades, updating the upstairs apartments, and providing necessary updates to the building’s roof, electrical systems, and heating and plumbing systems.

“With the need to repair the damage caused by the fire, our organization has been looking at using this opportunity to determine if it is possible to complete other much-needed renovations throughout our entire building,” said TBT Board President Lisa Larkin. “With the possibility of such a large-scale renovation, we are also in the early stages of working with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to secure a matching grant to make this renovation possible. We appreciate all of our patron’s patience as we plan to secure our future in our beloved historic building.”

An overview of the upcoming programming can be found below. Bio’s for each director can be found attached to this press release. Full show information, including how to buy tickets and how to stream can be found on the theater’s website at <https://www.thunderbaytheatre.com/virtual-season.html>

***Miss Julie* by August Strindberg**

**Directed by Tasha Spear**

**August 12, August 13, August 14**

After a broken engagement, Miss Julie has descended into a fit on Midsummer Eve, and as usual, Jean and Christine are there to pick up the pieces. But what if she has shattered into too many pieces this time and one terrible mistake leads to a new level of desperation? *Miss Julie* is a timeless classic that asks us to examine our own thoughts about social class, gender norms, and love through the eyes of three seemingly unequal characters. And it might all be a game to some; but to others, it’s life or death.

***The Birds* by Aristophanes**

**Directed by Yasmine Jahanmir**

**September 16, September 17, September 18**

The Greek comedy produced in 414 BCE follows Pisthetaerus, a middle-aged Athenian who persuades the world’s birds to create a new city in the sky to be suspended between heaven and earth. The city is built, and Peisthetaerus and his bird comrades must then fend off the undesirable humans who want to join them in their new Utopia. This fantastical comedy is one of Aristophanes’ greatest comedies that also comments on the imperialistic dreams and impending decline of Athens.

***The Twilight Zone***

**Directed by Ciera Eis**

**September 24, September 25, September 26**

Experience two of the most iconic episodes from *The Twilight Zone* adapted for theater, “The Monsters are Due on Maple Street” and “Five Characters In Search of an Exit.” *The Twilight Zone* was a television series that ran in the 1950’s and 1960’s that incorporated elements of fantasy, suspense, psychological thriller, and dark comedy.